JEAN GREY

MARVEL 004
FALL OF X
SIMONSON
CHANG
MAIOLO

MARVEL STUDIOS
THE MARVELS
NOW PLAYING IN THEATERS

You *know* where we are.

You know why we're *here!*

In the *White Hot Room.*

Because everyone's *dead!*

Not *quite*... Not *everyone.* *Hope--*

And it's *your* fault. Or that's what you keep *telling yourself.*

It isn't fair. I tried... *so hard.*

Life isn't fair. Why should *death* be? And, fair or not, *you're dead!*

ASHES TO ASHES

NO.

Not *quite.*

Not *permanently.*

Maybe.

Why are you all so *angry?*

It *can't* be just because we're dead.

We've been dead *before.*

Don't you *get* it? We're figments of your *past.*

Fragments of your nightmares.

Products of *imaginary stories* you've been telling yourself. *None* of this is *real.*

But then... *I* was *never* real.

Except *here.*

In the White Hot Room, *everything* is real...in its *own way.*

What do you *mean?*

You're *joking*, right?

I saw a *dozen realities.* And my gut said-- *forget them all!*

I was ready to *erase* the X-Men's *memories* of the future--until you *stepped in*--literally-- and *changed* that.

And you *saw* what happened.

Stop it! There's no *point* in this. I'm as *strong* as you are.

Stronger.

Then *act* like it. *Listen* to me! *Think!*

You *used* those memories to forge another *terrible* future.

You brought the *Phoenix* into it.

You made me what I am!

And *everybody died!*

Because you didn't *trust yourself.*

You didn't trust *me!*

You wouldn't *leave* well enough *alone!*

You had to *meddle...step in* where you weren't needed.

The X-Men were *dead.* I had to *know...*

...was it *my fault?* Could I have *saved* them? Could I save them *still?*

You're *confused. You're* the one who's dead. *I* made the *right choice.*

You chose arrogance...

...and *inflicted* it on the world!

You should have *trusted* your *instinct!*

You should have trusted *me!*

You're *mad* at *yourself.*

[fall__of]
[_____X]

[FALL OF X]

JEAN GREY

[fall__of]
[_____X]

Flames of Fear

Jean Grey is an Omega-level mutant, a telepath, and a founding member of the X-Men. As **Marvel Girl,** she fought alongside her fellow mutants to protect humanity and mutants alike. Then, as the host for the dangerous cosmic entity known as the **Phoenix Force,** she embarked down a road of destruction and sorrow. Returning from that dark path, she regained her place among the X-Men. Most recently, she was a member of the **Quiet Council** of the mutant nation of **Krakoa,** where mutantkind had finally found peace and safety.

Or so they thought. Then the anti-mutant organization **Orchis** attacked the Hellfire Gala. Jean was killed in the attack, along with scores of other mutants. Orchis threatened to annihilate increasing numbers of humans for every mutant found on the planet, forcing **Charles Xavier** to psychically banish the remaining mutants from Earth; only a handful with training were able to resist his telepathic command.

Untethered in time and space, Jean Grey's mind has been wandering down past avenues to figure out where it all went wrong. She's revisited her early adventures with the X-Men, rejected the Phoenix Force, and confronted her clone, Madelyne Pryor. With each new decision, the threads of history have become increasingly tangled, and time is running out...

1___[JEAN GREY]

© 2023 MARVEL. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental.

JEAN GREY

04

"ASHES TO ASHES"

Louise Simonson/Writer
Bernard Chang/Artist
Marcelo Maiolo/Color Artist
VC's Ariana Maher/Letterer
Jay Bowen/Design

Amy Reeder/Cover Artist

VC's Ariana Maher/Production
Lindsey Cohick/Assistant Editor
Sarah Brunstad/Editor
Jordan D. White/Senior Editor
C.B. Cebulski/Editor in Chief

Jean Grey created by
Stan Lee & **Jack Kirby**

[jean__04]
[grey__04]

[fall__of]
[_____X]

No. I...needed to consider the ramifications--

--to think things through.

Really? And how did that work out for you?

This wasn't my choice. Why did you force that nightmare on me?

Scott dead.

Wolverine dead.

I... I was arrogant. I stood in the X-Men's ashes, and I thought...

...maybe I was wrong.

Maybe it would have been better if someone else was in charge.

Maybe it wasn't all up to me.

Whereas, in ***reality,*** the Phoenix had ***hidden*** your body, and while you healed, it took on your ***aspect.***

In your ***name,*** it ***destroyed*** the D'bari's world. ***Unfortunate,*** but not ***your*** fault.

It rode your ***anger,*** your ***need,*** as far as was possible...

...until your ***true will*** asserted itself and ***stopped*** it. You ***died,*** of course.

But that wasn't the ***end***-- not by a long shot.

They ***found*** your true body ***cocooned*** beneath the sea and ***awakened*** you.

You were ***returned*** to ***Scott.***

All was ***restored.*** How is that ***terrible?***

Because of what came *afterward!*

Impulsive *arrogance* didn't work. So I tried *logic.*

And set them up to *die.* Not everyone--just your *dearest loves...*

From that perspective, the *reality* was so much kinder...

...to *you*, anyway.

Surely you haven't forgotten about *me*, as much as you all would *rather?*

Maddie. Madelyne *Summers.* Scott's *wife.*

My *clone.*

Mr. Sinister's *broodmare.*

Mother of the mutant *Nathan Christopher,* renamed *Cable.*

A *blank slate...*

...with so many... *possibilities--*

--ones I was eager to *exploit.*

As the *Goblin Queen.*

Ruler of *Demons.* New. *Improved.* And, in this reality, *transmoded...*

...given *free reign* over a Techno-Organically *transformed world.*

Maddie...

I was mad. *You* were mad. We lost our *tempers...* and things got a bit *out of hand.*

The *end* of the *world.* Very... *cathartic.* But, maybe, a bit too much...even for *me.*

Even here, you could have *stopped* me. Called the *Phoenix,* as you did before, in *your* reality.

But, again, you *second-guessed* yourself. *Questioned* your priorities. And *everyone*--literally *everyone...*

...well, they *didn't die.* Not *exactly.*

They just weren't quite *themselves* anymore.

You *blamed me.* But it wasn't *my* fault. *None* of it...in *any* reality.

It *was* your fault. In the *shuttle,* the *Phoenix* came to you.

Redolent with images of *murdered D'bari!*

And you *rejected* it.

So it found *me*--in my sinister-created *cocoon.* It brought *death* even as it breathed *life* into me.

You didn't rewrite *that* scenario, did you? Make yourself *accept* the *Phoenix's offer?*

You just shuffled the power onto *Wolverine*...and poor, innocent *Scott.*

So now you're saying I *should* have made a different choice?

Accepted the Dark Phoenix, *tainted* as it was, with the *deaths* of millions...

...because that would have *spared you?*

It would have cut the *drama.*

But would you have been *better off?* Lacking *power* from any source...

...never *alive?*

...Never *feeling?*

No *kingdom* to rule in *Hell?*

No *Scott?* No baby *Nathan?*

NOW you're getting it.

We have ***fine minds,*** as minds go. But that's not our greatest ***asset.***

Heart. Depth of ***feeling.*** That's what ***called*** the Phoenix to us.

Love is what you're all about. I have...***other priorities.***

Inferno ***happened.*** For better or worse.

And it's not the ***worst*** thing we've had to face.

Life is a ***process,*** however you're created.

We all ***learn...*** Even ***you.***

Even ***me.***

That's ***better.***

You've been creating worlds to prove you had ***no choice.*** Nightmare tales about how we--you and I--brought ***death*** and ***destruction.***

How you were ***damned*** if you did. ***Damned*** if you didn't. All paths lead to ***death.***

Is this really the ***story*** you wanted to ***tell*** yourself? Your dreams, so much more terrible than even ***this*** reality.

You're starting to ***awaken,*** aren't you? You're starting to ***remember.***

The ***Hellfire Gala.*** A ***party.*** To choose the members of a new X-Men team.

Orchis-- anti-mutant fanatics-- ***attacked.***

I tried to ***protect*** them. To ***save*** them all. I ***tried.***

I... failed.

Why... didn't you *come* to me?

How *could* I? I'm as *dead* now as you are.

Like you, I exist only *here*-- a *nexus* between all Phoenix hosts and our *eternal flame.*

I'm bits and *pieces. Inactive.* The White Hot Room is the *heart* of the Phoenix, and it is *broken.*

When you woke up here, you *asked,* "What did I do *wrong?*"

The answer is-- *nothing.*

Why do you think I *encouraged* those terrible images where, when you changed things, everything went *wrong?*

What did you think I was trying to *tell* you?

My instinctive choices were *right.* My impulse was *true.*

You did all you could... and *more.*

But there were *other forces* at play. Even *you,* powerful though you are, can't *control* everything.

And...no matter what *choices* we make, in the end, *death* claims us all?

But not *us*. At least, not *yet*. Not *completely*.

We're not *alone* here.

And there's one more thing we can *do*.

Shall we do it *together?*

Exodus! Hope! And I'm there!

And guess who *else*...

Now you *know.* You are the mutant *chalice* where the future will be wrought. You must *pass*--or else all ends.

Apocalypse. Threatening someone smaller than himself. Somehow that figures.

Look at *me.* I'm a *mess.* Hardly *alive*--probably not even *that* for long.

And poor *Hope*... It's up to *her* now.

Welcome to the *White Hot Room.*

Okay, Exodus. We're in the *White Hot Room.* What does that *mean?*

It is a *higher realm.* Spiritual.

I have often thought it akin to Tiphareth, from the *Kabbalah.*

We're in a place of primal creativity, of *ideas* made *flesh...*

Not *bad.* Sounds like Exodus knows his stuff.

Hope's basic power is to *mimic* the abilities of those near her.

There may be *something* we can do... *together.*

One last *gambit.*

Hope... Wings of *fire.* *Phoenix* fire. Blinding...

Did it work?

No longer am I the *woman you knew?* I am *fire* and *life incarnate?* Now and forever-- I am *Phoenix?*

Who *knows?* Maybe. *That* or... *something else.*

At least we did *no harm.*

So sure of yourself. So *arrogant.*

Just following my *gut.*

You know this *isn't over.* Not for *them.* Not for *us.*

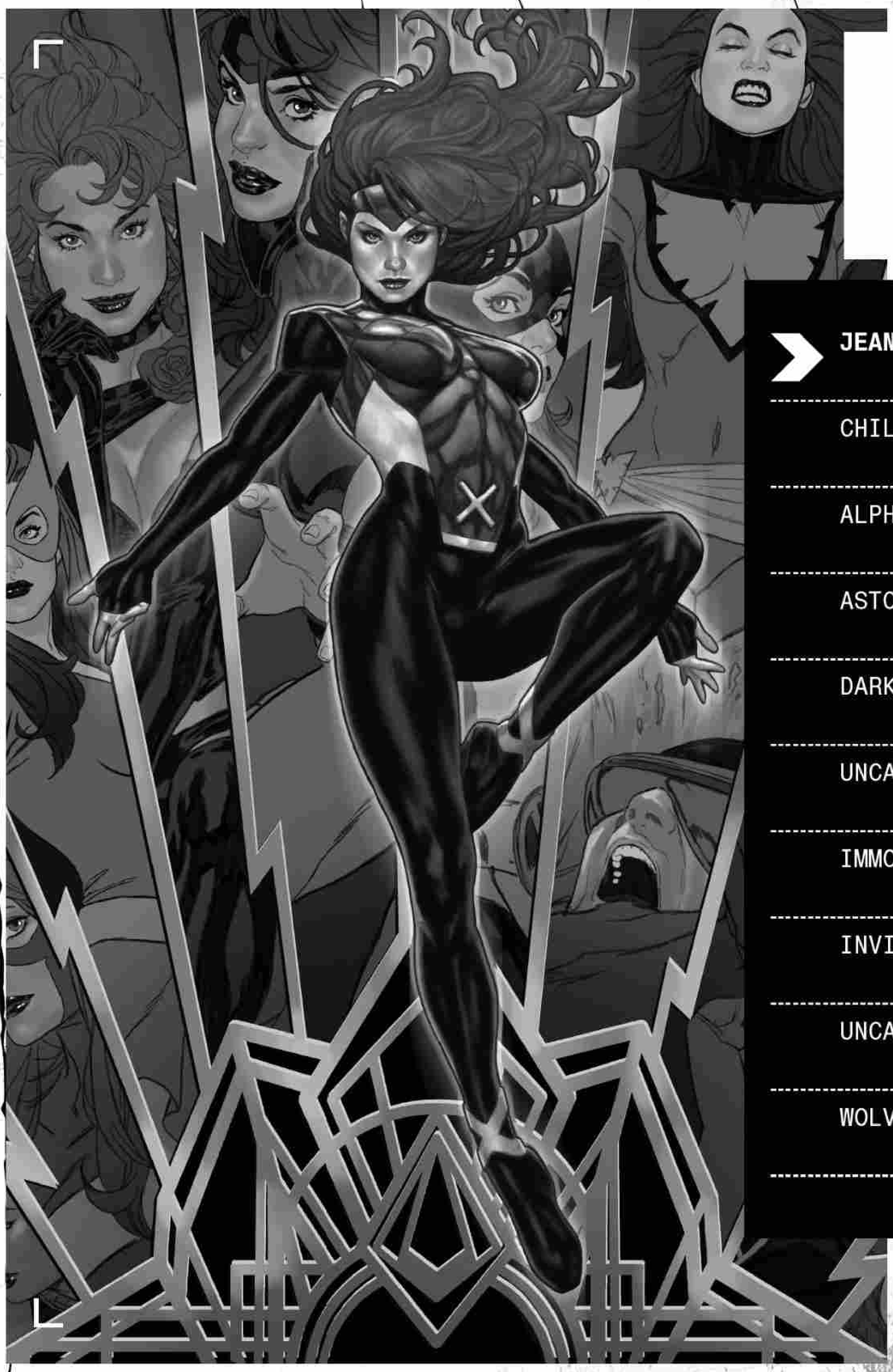
But what comes next--be it life or death--we face it *together.*

THE END?

KRAKOA is for all MUTANTS

[fall__of]
[_____X]

Jean Grey's adventures continue in IMMORTAL X-MEN #17!



JEAN GREY #4

CHILDREN OF THE VAULT #4

ALPHA FLIGHT #4

ASTONISHING ICEMAN #4

DARK X-MEN #4

UNCANNY AVENGERS #4

IMMORTAL X-MEN #17

INVINCIBLE IRON MAN #12

UNCANNY SPIDER-MAN #4

WOLVERINE #39

[kra_[0.0]…]
[koa_[0.0]…]

[00__jean_]
[grey__.04]

KAMIC RIDER

MARIKA